



HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES NEWSLETTER

2030 Eleventh Avenue, Suite 10 • P.O. Box 876 • Helena, Montana 59624 • (406) 449-8611

April, 1990

Volume 2, No. 1

HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES WESTERN UNITED STATES CONFERENCE

May 30 - June 2, 1990
Kalispell, Montana

Project Coordinator: Donald Espelin, M.D.

The HMHB Western US Conference provides critical, current information concerning maternal child health issues for professionals. Health care providers, social workers, administrators, and all others interested in the wellbeing of mothers and children should attend. Workshops examine maternal-child health, rural health, perinatal medicine, as well as coalition building and development.

HMHB Forums

Utilizing the expertise of successful HMHB state coalitions, forums on Wednesday, May 30, include two sessions. A morning forum probes issues of coalition maintenance, funding, program development, incorporation, and long-range planning. An afternoon session centers on issue identification and solutions.

An Evening of Montana Hospitality

An opportunity to relax and enjoy Montana with other conference participants... a two-hour sunset cruise on beautiful Flathead Lake, followed by a western barbecue at Flathead Lake Lodge on Wednesday, May 30. The cost is \$25 per person, tickets should be purchased with your advance registration.

Featured Speakers

C. Arden Miller, MD is Professor of Maternal and Child Health at the University of North Carolina, School of Public Health. He directed the Child Health Outcomes Project which monitored trends in child health, relating them to changes in social policy and financing. He is the past President of the American Public Health Association, and in the Spring of 1988, lectured and consulted on Maternal and Child Health at China Medical university, Shenyang, People's Republic of China.

David Gagnon, MPH is currently the Executive Director of the National Perinatal Information Center which he developed to meet the information needs of the 600 perinatal centers in the U.S. He is also Vice President of Planning for the Women & Infants' Hospital of Rhode Island. He served as President of the National Perinatal Association and the Institute for

continued on page 2

LATE-BREAKING NEWS!

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, The Montana Coalition has been awarded the American Medical Association's 1990 Adolescent Health Congress Award for "Recognition of Excellence in Coordination of Adolescent Health Services within a State." The award recognizes outstanding programs for intervention efforts coordinating services to all youth in a state, using an approach that minimizes fragmentation and facilitates optimal access to care at the community level. Particular emphasis was placed on statewide incentives and optimal coordination at the local level. Awards will be presented at the AMA National Congress on Adolescent Health, May 10-12, 1990 in Washington D.C.

*Healthy Mothers,
Healthy Babies,
The Montana Coalition*

Executive Director:

D. Elizabeth Roeth, RNC, MBA

Administrative Assistant:

Elsie Armstrong

Community Educator:

Judy Garrity

Newsletter Editor:

Suzanne Wilcox

HMHB Western U.S. Conference (continued from page 1)

Child Advocacy, and was a member of the Implementation Task Force for Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, Washington, D.C.

Everett Rhoades, MD, a native of Oklahoma and a member of the Kiowa Tribe, is Director of the Indian Health Service and responsible for a \$1 billion national health care delivery program aimed at preventative, curative, and community care for approximately 1.1 million American Indians and Alaska Natives throughout the U.S. He is also an Assistant Surgeon General in the U.S. Public Health Service!

Special Guests

Jessie Bierman, MD

Professor Emerita Berkeley School of Maternal Public Health, Child Health Pioneer

Lori Cooper

Executive Director, National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

David Altman, PhD

Associate Director, Stanford University, Health Promotion Resource Center

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For more information
please call MSU's Continuing
Education for the Health
Professional at (406) 994-4930.

BOARD NEWS

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Board Member, Suzie Shaffer, has resigned from the Board of Directors to move to Arizona where her husband Roger, an airline pilot, is based. Suzie's contribution has been great. She brought a valuable business perspective, as she is a special agent for Northwestern Mutual Life. She made a special contribution serving as Project Coordinator for the Teen Health Project, and provided valuable testimony to the Board of Education in support of Project Excellence. We wish Suzie well and know that Arizona Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies will be greatly interested in her arrival!

Suzie, **YOU WILL BE MISSED!**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

-- Marietta Cross, President,
HMHB Board of Directors

Just when you think you've had it, the brain is on overload, the desk is a disaster, the mention of another paper becomes a dirty word, you are questioning your mental health... a note arrives from a beautiful daughter with the words, "I just wanted to say I love you." The fact that it is attached to six pink roses is not immaterial, but the meat is on that little card.

What is this thing called love? What has love got to do with Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies? **EVERYTHING.**

- it's the nurse that hangs in there and keeps a low birthweight prevention project going
- it's the doctor who says, "OK I'll see her"
- it's the volunteer who asks if there's anything more he or she can do
- it's any of the hundreds in Montana who stay the extra minutes, walk the extra block (or mile), make the phone call, or just listen

It is the little things... those things that have to happen in order for mountains to move and, as a friend says, the brick to fall out of the wall.

The companions are faith... lots of it, in ourselves as individuals, and in systems; perseverance accompanied by patience, some tolerance and maybe some intolerance... of those things that we know are not right, nor practical, nor good, that are robbing us of our most precious asset... our children.

There is a part of prenatal care that has always escaped our understanding. Even in the absence of disease, prenatal care appears to lead to healthier pregnancies. Even if there is no Rh problem, or gestational diabetes or hypertension, the woman who enters care early in pregnancy has a better outcome all around than the similar woman who gets little or no care... How come?

Could the reason be that she has someone to talk to, someone she perceives as caring about what happens to her, who is kind and helpful, genuine and real? Could it be that most of us, pregnant or

not, do better when we know that someone cares? Sounds pretty elementary, but unfortunately it may not always be so.

I like to think that one of the reasons, if not the main reason, that the Coalition has been so successful is because we care... we are made up of a lot of people that care... and when a lot of people care about something, things happen.

But I want to make another point. That is, we must not get too carried away with our successes. We must never forget about the nurse out there, or the doctor, the social worker, or the helper... those "in the trenches" so to speak. They need our constant support, help, and encouragement... They are the ones who get up every morning and "go at it." They don't always have time to write letters or stand up in the legislature. But they are a big part of that caring community. They are a composite of love. As Paul described so eloquently 2000 years ago... "and now abide faith, hope and love; but the greatest of these is love."

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation Funds HMHB for 2 Additional Years

The Board of Trustees of The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation has approved a two-year grant in the amount of \$240,000 to the HMHB Montana Coalition for support of years 4 and 5 of the HMHB Promoting Action for Teen Health (PATH) project.

The funds will enable HMHB to carry out the full five-year plan, begun in 1987 to increase the capability of local communities in Montana to establish programs to reduce teen pregnancy and other high-risk adolescent behaviors. The project focuses on community coalitions that emphasize education, skills training and job opportunities, access to affordable health services, and community information.

We are deeply indebted to the following individuals for taking time out of their busy schedules at Christmas time to meet with Donna P. Hall, Project Officer, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and Amy Loomis, of the Stuart Foundations:

Steve Yeakel, Governors Chief of Staff; Marilyn Miller, Governor's Human Resources Coordinator; Gail Gray, Jack Copps, and Spencer Sartorius, Office of Public Instruction; Maxine Ferguson and Bob Moon, DHES; Erv Winslow and Kim Gardner, Tri-County Youth Council, Helena; and Rob Sand, Teen Task Force, Mission Valley Flathead Indian Reservation

1990 COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION AWARDS PROGRAM

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies was one of five recipients of Montana's 1990 Community Health Promotion Awards for outstanding health promotion programs presented by the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences. The award was presented by Don Pizzini, Director of the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences at the Montana Public Health Association meeting in Lewistown in April. Montana's

award winners have been submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Community Health Promotion Award Program for national consideration. The Secretary of Health and Human Services will announce the national winners in June 1990. Congratulations and a heartfelt thank you to all HMHB members and volunteers that helped make this award possible!

Donald E. Espelin, M.D. receives MARY E. SOULES Award

Dr. Don Espelin, Founder of HMHB was the recipient of the Montana Public Health Association Mary E. Soules Award for distinguished service in Public Health. This prestigious award was presented to Don at the Montana Public Health Association meeting in Lewistown in April. Under Don's untiring leadership, vision and commitment to maternal child health, Montana has established mothers and children as a critical population to be addressed by Montana citizenry, the State Legislature, state policy-makers and the Governor's Office. He is truly a man who comes from his heart and has given so much of himself to public health in Montana. HMHB thanks MPHA for their wisdom in selecting Don for the Mary E. Soules Award and Don, thank you for your tremendous efforts for mothers and children in Montana!

Did you know...

- Every 8 seconds of the school day, an American child drops out (500,000/yr.)
- Every 26 seconds, an American child runs away from home (1.2 million/yr.)

- Every 47 seconds, an American child is abused (675,000/yr.)
- Every 67 seconds, an American teenager has a baby (472,000 a year).
- Every 53 minutes an American child dies because of poverty (9,855).

CORRECTIONS

Our apologies to the following individuals and organizations for errors appearing in the previous issue of the HMHB Newsletter.

- **WIC Programs in Montana:** On page 10 the article entitled "Survey Finds Hunger in Montana" represents WIC programs as available in *only* 11 counties. The article should have stated

that WIC programs are available in *all but* 11 Montana counties.

- The Interagency Committee article on page 6, lists Nola Torgeson as representing Mountain View School. She represents the Department of Family Services.
- Suzie Shaffer's name is misspelled on page 1. The correct spelling is Shaffer.

1990 New Members

Individual:

Mary Kay Allen, Anaconda
Lori Byron, Hardin
Helen Coleman, Great Falls
Peggy Burt, Butte
Sandra DeStaffany
Northern Cheyenne WIC
Program, Lame Deer
Bonnie Lewis, Fort Benton
Lawrence Palazzo, Glasgow
Rep. Jessica Stickney,
Miles City
Susan Opitz, M.D., Helena
Kathy Balas, Lewistown
Patricia Brown, Billings
St. Vincent's Hospital, Billings
Nancy Giles, Great Falls
Diane Sands, Helena
Laurie Glover, Great Falls

Organizational

Teen Task Force, Charlo
Butte YMCA, Butte
Cascade City-County Health
Department, Great Falls
Montana Home Economics
Association, Shawmut
Beaverhead County Health
Department, Dillon
Gallatin County Health
Department, Bozeman
Butte HMHB, Butte
LaLeche League of Montana,
Helena
Missoula City-County Health
Department, Missoula

1990 Sustaining Members

Donald E. Espelin, M.D.,
Helena
Leonard Kaufman, Ph.D.,
Billings
March of Dimes, Montana
Big Sky Chapter
Lindsay Richard, M.D.,
Missoula

Montana Tobacco Tax Initiative

A signature gathering effort is underway in support of Initiative #115, a measure that would increase the excise tax on cigarettes from 18 cents to 43 cents per package. In addition, the tax on other tobacco products would also be raised from 12 1/2 percent to 25 percent.

Leading the initiative effort is a group, *Health Professionals, Consumers and the General Public Supporting the Tobacco Tax Initiative*, headed by three Montana physicians: Robert McKenzie, Bozeman; Robert Shepard, Helena; and Michael Priddy, Missoula.

It is predicted that an increased excise tax would cause fewer individuals, particularly young people, to start smoking. In addition, the increased tax would provide funding for comprehensive community health education.

Currently, all cigarette tax money is allocated to Montana's long-range building program. During fiscal year 1989, \$10,923,253 was raised by cigarette tax, and \$802,615 was raised by tax on other tobacco products. At the current rate of tobacco usage, the tax increase would provide \$33.6 million annually and would be allocated in the following manner:

- 29.67% to the long-range building program debt service fund
- 12.19% to the long-range building capital projects fund

The remaining funds would be deposited in a fund to be known as the Tobacco Education and Preventive Health Care Fund and would be distributed as follows:

At least 50% (\$9,000,000) would be allocated to grants to school districts, community clinics, community-based organizations, colleges and universities, volunteer health agencies, local health departments, hospitals, and similar organizations for the purposes of establishing community-based health education programs focusing on youth under 21 years of age.

At least 6% of the fund would be allocated to grants to public or private organizations for research on tobacco-related health consequences.

At least 30% of the fund would be allocated to grants to public or private organizations for prenatal and perinatal education, or treatment of tobacco-related illnesses.

The remainder of the fund would be allocated to administrative costs, additional funding for grants described above, or for grants to public or private programs concerned with fire prevention, environmental conservation, and damage restoration.

To place Initiative #115 on the November ballot, approximately 25,000 signatures are needed by the end of June. For more information, call the American Lung Association toll free at 1-800-252-6368.

SAVE THESE DATES

Children Having Children Conference

September 27 through 29, 1990
in Great Falls, MT

MONTANA PREGNANCY RISKLINE 1-800-521-2229

Project Coordinator: Joan FitzGerald

How many glasses of wine can I drink during my pregnancy? What are the effects of the penicillin my doctor gave me on my unborn child? I had dental X-rays before I knew I was pregnant, what are the effects on my baby? These are just some of the types of calls made to the Pregnancy Riskline.

The Montana Pregnancy Riskline, established in 1987, continues to provide information about the prenatal risks of exposures to a wide variety of agents to 40-50 Montana callers per month. The majority of these calls are made by consumers. However, many health care providers query the up-to-date database on behalf of their pregnant, soon to be pregnant, or breast-feeding clients. The information is free and calls are followed up by a letter to consumers needing a written summary.

Information about the Riskline is summarized in a new brochure. Copies are available from the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies office. Further information about the Riskline will be distributed during the Baby Your Baby campaign.

Kalispell Heart Conference a Success

According to Mary Feuersinger, conference planning chair, the *Early Start for a Healthy Heart* conference in Kalispell on February 16 was a tremendous success. Feuersinger reports that the conference attracted a standing-room-only crowd (over 450) of professionals and community members. Nationally recognized experts in the field of cardiovascular disease risk reduction presented subject matter which had significant applicability to the jobs of the attendees.

The planning committee for the conference consisted of:

Mary Feuersinger, Missoula County Health Department; Bob Moon, Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences; Virginia Greely and Jack Crandall, Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories; Ellie Hilpert, American Heart Association; Gerry Baertsch, the University of Montana; Carla Cox, Western Montana Clinic; and Phyllis Dennee, Montana State University Extension Service.

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies was a supporter of the conference.

Access to Care Committee

Project Coordinator: Marietta Cross, RN

Currently the *Access to Care* Project is involved in tracking the process and progress of Medicaid reform in the state. The communications and sharing of information among the committee, the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services and Medicaid offices have been more than positive.

This type of progress encourages a feeling of accomplishment. We are all working together for a common goal, and though often difficult, changes are being made. The beneficiaries of such accomplishments are women and children, by enhancing their ability to access care.

Issues of increasing eligibility, presumptive eligibility for pregnant women, increased reimbursement for providers of obstetrical care, and continuous care for pregnant women are being addressed. Recommendations are being made to the Executive Office. While the committee is optimistic about the potential outcome, there remains a need for considerable effort to educate legislators about issues that involve money.

The presence of the committee chair on the Governor's Advisory Council for the MIAMI project provides a liaison for education and guidance in establishing policy aimed at reducing the

tragedy and expense of low birthweight and the accompanying infant mortality in Montana.

The *Access to Care* committee is also currently reviewing information about Montana care providers as related to the availability of prenatal care. For prenatal care to be effective it must be available and it must be used. As a means by which this goal can be met, the committee will be working in cooperation with the Baby Your Baby media campaign. As the public becomes more aware of the importance and availability of prenatal care, professionals must be ready and able to provide the services.

Montana Children's Alliance

Members of the Montana Children's Alliance have been meeting monthly to develop issues essential to the well being of Montana's children.

Many individuals from various arms of state government have graciously spent time with MCA members discussing issues and concerns. Among those: Marilyn Miller, Governor's Office; Nancy Keenan, Superintendent of Public Instruction; and State Agency Directors Julia Robinson, SRS; Bob Mullen, DFS; Curt Chisholm, Dept.

of Institutions; Steve Nelson, Board of Crime Control; and Dale Taliaferro, DHES.

In addition, Joel Williams, Governor's Office of Budget and Program Planning, and Mary McCue, Legislative Council, provided essential information to assist MCA members in formulating issues for the Children's Agenda.

Representative Dorothy Bradley's excellent presentation on the sales tax issue gave members an oppor-

tunity to learn more about this complex matter.

The Montana Children's Alliance is planning its biennial retreat to reach consensus and finalize issues to be included in the 1990 *Montana Children's Agenda*.

MCA Retreat

Date: June 12-13, 1990

*Place: Cane Ridge West
Lincoln, MT*

*Contact HMHB office for more
information (449-8611)*

Folic Acid Vitamins Beneficial In Early Pregnancy and Before

A study performed at Boston University's Center for Human Genetics suggested that women who take over the counter vitamin pills containing folic acid within the first six weeks of pregnancy are less likely to have a baby with a serious neurological birth defect. These defects occur around the sixth week of pregnancy, usually two weeks after a missed period. If vitamins are effective in preventing birth defects, women should take them during the early weeks of their pregnancy or preferably when they are planning to conceive. Neural tube defects, such as those causing spina bifida and hydrocephaly, are some of the most common and severe birth defects affecting 4,000 babies a year.

In a study of about 23,000 pregnant women, half took vitamins with folic acid in the first six weeks of their pregnancy. Mothers who took vitamins had one-fourth the risk of carrying a baby with neural tube defects. Dr.

Donald L. Patrick, an advisor to the Spina Bifida Association of America, said this study was "very, very important. It will raise the debate about should we make a recommendation and how do we implement a policy that will reach the women who need vitamin supplements."

Dr. Aubrey Milunsky, chief author of the study, said he thinks that all women should take over-the-counter multivitamins with folic acid when they are trying to become pregnant and within the first six weeks of their pregnancy. Other researchers agree, but some including Federal officials feel that more research needs to be done before policy recommendations can be changed. No negative side effects are known for such use of multivitamins.

Taken from the *National Women's Health Report*, ISSN 0741-9147, Winter 1990, Volume 12, Number 1

Thank You! Thank You!

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies
The Montana Coalition wishes to express our sincere thanks to Montana University Affiliated Program Satellite for sponsoring the Pregnancy Riskline.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Virginia Gilbertson for her assistance on the Robert Wood Johnson proposal and for her continued involvement with the Indian Advisory Group. We wish Virginia success and happiness in her new position.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

*NAACOG's Third Biennial
Research Conference*

*Making A Difference in
Women's and Infants' Health*

*July 20-21, 1990
Denver, Colorado*

For further information, contact the Registrar, NAACOG, Department of Education and Research, 409 12th Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20024-2192; 1-800-673-8499, ext. 2447, or collect at 202-863-2447



HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES

PATH PROJECT

Promoting Action for Teen Health

2030 Eleventh Avenue, Suite 10 • P.O. Box 876 • Helena, Montana 59624 • (406) 449-8611

PATH UPDATE

PATH volunteers continue to bring creative energy to the Project in a variety of ways.

The Indian Advisory Group has been instrumental in assisting HMHB staff in developing a proposal for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The proposal seeks funding to establish and/or maintain coalitions on each of Montana's seven Indian reservations over a three-year period. If the proposal is funded, a fulltime HMHB staff member would be hired to provide frequent on-site technical assistance to the reservation communities. Funding would also be provided to reservation communities in the form of mini-grants for their identified projects.

On January 25, the PATH Task Force received a full day of media training with Bob Howard, HMHB's media consultant. Bob presented helpful tips on how to work with media personnel, how to present oneself and how to keep an interview focused. Practice interviews with volunteers were videotaped and critiqued. In addition, participants received a Speakers Bureau Kit which contains concise written information on helpful tips for setting up a presentation, a brief overview of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies and the PATH Project, a resource listing of materials available for presentations and suggested answers to difficult questions which may be posed by an audience.

Members of the PATH Interagency Committee have been instrumental

in garnering recognition for and support of the PATH Project. The Committee has developed a proposal to create a statistical database on children and youth. The database would combine all statistical information currently reported by state agencies in one central location, thus allowing a complete overview of the status of children and youth in Montana.

Interagency Committee members are assisting HMHB to develop strategies to assess the needs and identify appropriate interventions for children from birth through 18 years of age. Focal areas include early childhood, elementary school children, middle school years and high school aged youth.

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE REPORTS THAT "KIDS COUNT"

In 1989, Governor Stephens established an Interagency Task Force to coordinate sharing of resources among government agencies. Such sharing is aimed at increasing efficiency and reducing costly duplication.

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Subcommittee was one of four subcommittees organized by the task force to address issues related to children's services. The Committee's report entitled "Kids

continued on page 8

Adolescent Health Survey Report Now Available!

During the 1988-89 school year, randomly selected junior and senior high schools in Montana participated in a western United States Adolescent Health Survey. The survey was designed to determine the most effective means of addressing the health needs of Montana's young people.

The results of this survey are now available in a report entitled *Montana Adolescent Health Status* which summarizes some of the most important information provided by 7th, 9th, and 12th grade students. These results will undoubtedly assist educators, health professionals, social service providers, youth service leaders and parents in identifying the characteristics, causes and potential remedies of behavior-based threats to adolescent health.

The report is available from Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies for a charge of \$10.00 (including postage and handling). To order, please complete and mail the enclosed order form with a check or money order made out to Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Beyond "Big Sky Country," the phrase most often used to describe Montana may very well be "A great place to raise kids." Indeed, Montana is a great state for families. Crime rates are low, schools are good, and drugs are not nearly as plentiful as in many parts of our country. However, while we Montanans can be proud of our past as we have just celebrated our centennial birthday, and while we can be moderately pleased with our present, we must prepare for the future now. The future is where our children must survive, and survival is becoming more and more difficult every year.

For example, today's generation of adolescents is already faced with dramatically more difficult conditions than those of even a couple of decades ago. Young people must sort through mixed messages about all aspects of life. They must discover their sexual selves in a society that at once denounces and glorifies sexual promiscuity. They must guess at the difference between just saying no to drugs and accepting the general assumption that there is a chemical solution to every problem from a headache to insomnia, from excess weight to the common cold. And very often

they must find their answers alone. In urban neighborhoods and even some rural towns, stable, close-knit relationships are rare; the sense of community that shapes identity is nearly nonexistent.

Our children must prepare for an economy that requires virtually all workers to think flexibly and creatively in ways that only an elite few were required, and educated, to do in the past. Skills that today catapult an employee to the top of the corporate ladder will soon be the norm — required for survival in the 1990s.

The major successes of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies during the last few years represent a tiny toehold in the future for Montana's children. Every baby that survived infancy due to our prenatal care programs is another bright spot in the future. Every adolescent girl who avoided pregnancy, every new mother who discovered a healthier lifestyle, every teen who realized new self-esteem through the efforts of HMHB and associated organizations represents another chance for a brighter future. But there is so much more to do.

In these changing times, when young people face unprecedented

choices and pressures, all too often the guidance they needed as children and need no less as adolescents, is prematurely withdrawn. Freed from the dependency of childhood, but not yet able to find their own path to adulthood, many young people feel a desperate sense of isolation. Surrounded only by their equally confused peers, too many make poor decisions with harmful or even lethal consequences. Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies is working in many areas, in cooperation with many agencies and organizations, toward providing information, building networks, and delivering services aimed at giving today's children a better chance to survive, even flourish, through adolescence and into adulthood.

HMHB Community Educator, Judy Garrity, is an active spokesperson concerning the needs and demands of the future. She believes a thorough understanding of the changes that are now taking place in our society provides an important foundation on which to plan and build programs that will meet the social and economic needs of Montana's youth.

KIDS COUNT

(continued from page 7)

Count Project" includes the following recommendations:

- Improve access to and affordability of prenatal care.
- Educate/motivate pregnant women to present themselves for early and continuous prenatal care.
- Improve the referral system so that more eligible women can be served by the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).
- Augment the federally-subsidized purchase of vaccine with state general fund monies so that immunization is available to more Montana children in need.
- Improve awareness of and access to early childhood screening programs offered to Medicaid eligible children.
- Increase the availability of family planning services to women at risk of an unintended pregnancy.
- Provide preventive dental care to greater numbers of Montana's school-aged children.
- Improve health education and care for Montana's adolescents.
- Increase public awareness and child find activities throughout the state so that infants or children "at risk" of developmental delay or those with special needs can receive necessary services.

These recommendations represent the thoughtful study, dialogue and reflection of subcommittee members. HMHB commends them for a job well done!

"Growing Up Christian in a Sexy World"

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies provided a grant to the Helena Ministerial Association to develop and facilitate a program called "Growing Up Christian in a Sexy World." A condition of the grant stipulated that the course be developed as a pilot program for use in other Montana communities. A kit containing books and media resources has been assembled and is available for loan to other communities that wish to offer this program for parents and their 5th and 6th grade children. The program is endorsed by the Church and Education Commission of the Montana Association of Churches.

Sixteen churches took part in the development and promotion of the six-session course. Representatives from various churches, incorporating various denominations and embodying liberal and conservative viewpoints, began by developing a consensus concerning the content, goals and objective of the course. The reconciliation of such an approach promises a thorough, thoughtful and effective resource.

The six-section course outline covers the following:

1. Everyone has something to say about sex.
2. Does Everybody feel as different as I do?
3. Good Grief -- What's happening to me?
4. Childhood sexual abuse prevention.
5. How did I get here?
6. Being alike, being liked, being myself.

Three sessions were offered on two consecutive Saturday mornings. 6 presenters included 2 pastors, 2 school nurses, a therapist and a college counselor. 74 participants included parents and their 5th and 6th grade children.

Parents and youth who attended the March/April sessions applauded the optimism and objectivity of the content and the presenters. Highly valued was the facilitation of parent-child communication about sexuality and sexual issues throughout the classes, as well as a foundation for ongoing communication after the conclusion of the sessions.

The "Growing Up Christian in a Sexy World" Resource Kit is available to local ministerial associations, churches, and other community organizations. The kit pro-

vides a structure and course outline, as well as various resources, from which communities can facilitate educational sessions for parent-child teams.

If you are interested in borrowing the "Growing Up Christian in a Sexy World" Resource Kit, or receiving more information please contact: Ken Moore, 311 Power Street, Helena, MT 59601, 442-3525.



Project Choice -- "Let's Talk" Month

Director: Barb Holden

March was a particularly eventful month for Project Choice. It was dubbed the "Let's Talk" month, and the coalition's activities focused on efforts that promoted communication. Events sponsored by community organizations aimed at facilitating youth communications, were promoted by Project Choice. In cooperation with the Public Library, Project Choice produced a reading list of library materials available, appropriate to the theme "Some Choices Last a Lifetime."

Carol Cassell was the highlight of events sponsored by Project Choice during the "Let's Talk" month. A

workshop for professionals, titled "Pals, Partners, and Friends: Strategies for helping teens develop healthy relationships," was attended by 99 on Friday, March 2. In the evening, 145 teens and parents met for a session stressing communication and understanding in sexuality and relationships. Saturday's "Teen Savvy" program drew 170 teens to hear Carol discuss love and relationships from a teen perspective. Those who attended also had an opportunity to participate in two of four workshops: How to Survive in Love Games, How to Make More Friends and Keep Them, Dating Pressures, and Body Language and Image.

The last event for "Let's Talk" month was a Refusal Skills Fair. Videos, books, and programs were displayed for individuals who work with teens. School counselors, teachers, and youth group leaders attended.

Project Choice is pleased to receive status as a Junior League for 1990-91. We will receive \$8,500 and between 10 and 20 volunteers committed to working in the project.

Project Choice is looking forward to being a sponsor of the *Children Having Children* conference in Great Falls, September 26-28. *Save those dates!*

TEEN TASK FORCE

Director: Rob Sand

Rob Sand reports, "We are now the Teen Task Force, Inc. We will soon submit papers to the IRS for a determination letter that will hopefully declare us a tax-exempt (501 c 3) organization. We are behind on our grant-writing. Our initial funding period under HMHB is over with some tasks incomplete at this time."

In looking at the activities of the last several months, it is clear that youth leadership development is becoming the primary focus of Teen Task Force prevention efforts. Prevention efforts consist of two primary elements: 1) working with youth to support and facilitate

youth leadership and 2) working with adults to promote effective parenting skills, facilitate curriculum development in schools, and provide community development training.

During the winter the Task Force has been busy with:

- Community forums in Arlee, St. Ignatius, Charlo, Ronan, & Polson
- A PACT (Parents and Adolescents Can Talk) workshop
- A Teen Task Force meeting with youth representatives from St. Ignatius (Teen Connection) and Polson Team TAD (Together Against Drugs) and TTF, in which participants discussed their roots, roles, and responsibilities.
- A joint project with the Salish Kootenai College Drug-Free Schools program which promoted a series of training workshops for schools and communities on Student Assistance Programs. The workshops provided intervention training for a broad range of problems our children may incur.

- Good progress has been made on our *Health Services and Resources Directory*
- Classes and support groups continue, and are going well

The Teen Task Force has helped with some middle-school mini-camps and has supported and spoken with youth on several occasions. A YMCA proposal for the Charlo area is gaining steam with a strong focus on prevention. Youth groups have formed and are growing in each community. An upcoming mini-camp on Flathead Lake for high school students may be the beginning of regional camps for Western Montana. The Center for Adolescent Development is hiring 10-14 VISTA volunteers for the state, and the Task Force anticipates help from them to strengthen the youth groups. Four local towns will be sending youth to MTI & TIP camps this summer. The young people are eager to improve their leadership skills, and of course, discover fun ways to build healthy communities within a broad-based prevention alliance.

Investing In Children In the 90's

Judy Garrity, HMHB's Community Educator, recently attended the annual Children's Defense Fund (CDF) conference in Washington, D.C. A focal point of the conference was CDF's Children 1990 Campaign, designed to make children's needs a major theme during 1990 in the public policy arena and campaign dialogue during political elections. CDF's end-of-the-decade report cards on the status of U.S. Children indicate that our nation has lost ground during the past decade in preparing children for productive lives. As examples, the U.S. is 19th in the world in infant mortality rates, 15th in childhood immunization of one-year-olds against polio, and 19th in teacher-to-student ratios in public schools. Among eight major industrialized nations, the U.S. had the worst child poverty rate.

Not a single U.S. state earned close to a "passing" grade on the report card. The average state score was 32. Montana's average score was 7 percentage points *below* the national average.

MONTANA'S REPORT CARD

Ind.*	Year	No.	Rank	Progress		
				Year	No.	Rank
1	1978	78.4%	15	1987	77.2%	27
2	1978	11.6	8	1987	10.0	29
3	1978	5.6%	8	1987	5.5%	12
4	1980	48.5	19	1986	42.4	15
5	1980	12.5%	10	1987	19.4%	14
6	1981	50.7	46	1987	75.2	45
7	1979	13.8%	22	1985	20.1%	27
8	1979	35.5	24	1989	42.1	32
9	1982	78.7%	9	1987	86.2%	6
10	1982	19.8	16	1988	16.8	36

* Indicators

1. Women who received early prenatal care during the first trimester of pregnancy.
2. Number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births.
3. The percentage of low birth weight births.
4. Births to females ages 15-19 per 1,000 women of those ages.
5. Percentage of births to unmarried women.
6. Paternities established per 1,000 births to unmarried women.

7. Percent of children under 18 who are poor.
8. Affordability of housing based on the fair market rental price of a two-bedroom apartment as a percent of poverty of a family of four.
9. High school graduation as measured by the percentage of ninth graders who complete high school four years later.
10. Percent of youth ages 16-19 who are unemployed.

Eastern Montana Adolescent Action

Co-Chairs: Joan Eldridge and Rosemary Webber

What began at a meeting on teenage pregnancy in June, 1988 has rapidly grown into a coalition covering a six-county area in Eastern Montana. Eastern Montana Adolescent Action was awarded grant monies from the Montana Coalition of HMHB last October to use in work under the PATH project. The counties involved are

Richland, Roosevelt, Valley, Dawson, Wibaux and Fallon.

Work continues in several areas at this time. The task of building a strong coalition is a true challenge, especially when the geographic distance covered is so vast. Formal application for chapter status has been made. EMAA will become "Eastern Montana Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies." The Steering Committee meets monthly and draws representation from all

counties. The current Executive Committee represents only Richland County, allowing meetings on an immediate, as-needed basis. Joan Eldridge, Fairview, WIC Nutritionist and Rosemary Webber, Fairview, Home Economics teacher, are Co-Chairs. Kathy Pease, RN, Lambert, is Vice Chair. Bernie Fox, newspaper reporter is Secretary. Mike Weber, Fairview, lawyer is Treasurer.

continued on page 12

Yellowstone Valley Chapter Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

President: Doris Biersdorf, RD, LN

In the fall of 1988, local providers of maternal and child health services met with representatives from the State Department of Health, to discuss the issues of access to prenatal care and the incidence of low birthweight infants in Yellowstone County. It was decided to establish a local Perinatal Council to, not only share information about current services, but to begin to address some of the maternal and child health needs in our county. Foreseeing the need for an ongoing coalition structure, it was decided to form a local chapter of the Montana Coalition of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies.

Monthly meetings began in the Spring of 1989. The meetings are utilized to discuss goals, implement plans to impact maternal and child health issues, and provide an opportunity to learn about available perinatal services and identify the needs of women and children in our communities.

A kick-off celebration announcing the establishment of the local coalition was held in September of

1989, with a proclamation by the Mayor, television coverage, and participation by healthy mothers and babies, and a local legislator, the father of one of the healthy babies. It provided an opportunity to increase public awareness of the maternal and child health needs in our community and state.

The membership has broadened to include individuals and organizations interested in maternal and child issues. As of March, 1990, membership includes 41 individuals, 5 organizations, 3 sponsors and 4 honorary members.

A resource directory was printed to increase awareness of available resources and services. Distribution of the directory to current members and to local organizations and agencies who provide services and referrals for women and children began in December, 1989.

The local chapter was awarded a PATH grant, funding the main project of the coalition. Currently a survey of pregnancy prevention providers in Yellowstone County is being conducted. The goal is to determine the pregnancy preven-

tion services that are available to teens, evaluate them and determine the most effective programs.

Yellowstone Valley HMHB currently embodies 5 committees:

PATH
Program
Advocacy
Resource Directory
Membership

The Executive Committee is comprised of the Officers and the Chairwomen of those standing committees. The Officers for 1990 are:

Doris Biersdorf, President; Lil Anderson, Past-President; Terry Egan, Vice President; Joan McCracken, Treasurer; and Lynn Kennedy, Secretary.

The local chapter continues to enlist the support of the communities in the Yellowstone Valley. It has provided an opportunity to educate members about existing programs and services.

We believe it is within our reach to improve the health and welfare of mothers and children!

Eastern Montana Adolescent Action
continued from page 11

Recent community activities include:

- near completion of the first PACT course at Fairview High School with eleven parent-teen pairs in attendance
- Joan Eldridge has addressed several audiences on the issue of high-risk teens. Those requesting her expertise include Eastern Montana Teacher's Workshop in Sidney in October, 1989
- A gathering at Valley County has worked in conjunction with an existing board to determine necessary purchases of audiovisuals to be shared by the coalition.
- Wibaux County had a teen workshop over Christmas break and has activities planned into this summer.

On April 7th EMAA participated in the Richland County Health Fair in Sidney. Members of the Executive Committee manned the display booth from Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies. During the Health Fair, EMAA held an annual fund-raiser, raffling off a \$100 shopping spree at \$1 per ticket. The money earned from this activity is designated to pay the HMHB chapter fee.

Other future plans include holding community forums in each of the six participating counties, and establishing membership lists in each area. Plans are underway to begin a quarterly newsletter, to hold Mother/Daughter and Father/Son days, to send teens to MTI/TIP and to take part in several other activities.

**Great Falls Planning
a Formal HMHB
Coalition**

Chairperson: Nancy K. Giles

Plans are currently underway to formalize a local Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies coalition in Great Falls. To date, the group has been meeting on an informal basis as a networking group. Under the leadership of Nancy Giles, current members are meeting to formulate goals and objectives for the group to present to the State Board of Directors. A full-scale membership drive is planned for Fall, 1990.

Anyone interested in working with the Great Falls local coalition, please contact Nancy Giles at 761-0410 or Betty Hidalgo at 453-3646.

WATCH FOR CONTINUED DEVELOPMENTS!

**MONTANA COUNCIL FOR MATERNAL
AND CHILD HEALTH GEARS UP FOR '91**

Exec. Director: Paulette Kohman

The Montana Council for Maternal and Child Health is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to improving maternal and child health care in Montana. MCMCH educates and informs policy makers, in and out of government, who enact legislation, write regulations and implement policies which affect the health of babies, children and their mothers. Sustaining members include the Montana Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics; The Montana section, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; The Montana Perinatal Association; Big Sky Chapter, March of Dimes; Shodair Children's Hospital; and Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, The Montana Coalition.

One of the major roles of the Council is to identify and advocate for policy change through the legislative process. Elections for the 1991 Montana legislature are underway, and MCMCH will be actively involved in education of candidates at the primary and general election level.

Members in all legislative districts will be asked to participate in candidate meetings, perhaps even to create unique opportunities for candidates to become familiar with maternal and child health issues in the flesh. This may occur in settings ranging from newborn nurseries to public health clinics where policies are translated from dollars and cents to mothers and babies, and in some cases to life and death.

As the election process evolves into the legislative session, members and legislators will participate jointly in lively educational sessions where professionals in the maternal and child health care field and Montana's lawmakers will exchange views and come to terms with the realities of each others' vital roles in preserving the public health.

During the legislative session itself, the Council's Executive Director, Paulette Kohman, a former trial lawyer, will be coordinating the lobbying activities of the council, arranging for testimony from members, and advocating vigorously for the issues the Council has identified as critical to its mission. This will be the culmination of the biennial planning of the Council and promises to generate fascinating news for this column.

NEW!! COMMEMORATIVE BIRTH CERTIFICATES CELEBRATE MONTANA'S MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE!

Parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends, celebrate the birth of someone born in the "Big Sky" state. Give a commemorative gift to celebrate the birth of a baby, or to honor a Montana-born individual having a special birthday. The certificate is framable, personalized and a forever keepsake.

It symbolizes the importance of each individual in shaping Mon-

tana's future, and esteems children as our most valuable resources in determining that future.

For a tax-deductible contribution to Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies - The Montana Coalition, you honor someone special and make an investment in Montana's future by supporting HMHB's projects and activities to improve

the health of mothers and children in Montana.

To send or receive a Montana Commemorative Birth Certificate, fill out the order form on the back of this page. Send it with a check or money order for \$17.00 (a tax-deductible \$15.00 contribution plus \$2.00 for postage and handling) made out to "Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies."

JOIN HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

You can participate in the successes of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies by becoming a HMHB member. Your membership helps HMHB reach out to the mothers, children and youth of Montana and make a difference in their lives. You provide much-needed support for important programs and activities aimed at improving health conditions and services in the state of Montana.

If you have been a member of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies and have not renewed for 1990, please take a moment to do so now. If you have never been a member, this is an opportunity for you to help make a difference in a wide range of maternal and child health care issues. Please take a moment to complete the form on the opposite side of this page and apply for membership.

ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY REPORT & OTHER ITEMS

MONTANA ADOLESCENT HEALTH STATUS

The Western U.S. Adolescent Health Survey was developed as a tool to identify health needs of youth and determine the most effective means by which to address those needs. The *Montana Adolescent Health Status* is a clear, concise summary of the most important findings of the survey. It contains numerous graphs to allow easy interpretation of data and identification of significant trends. The report is designed to be functional and efficient, and will be helpful to any person or organization working with Montana's youth. The *Montana Adolescent Health Status* is available for \$10.00 per copy. See the article on page 7 for more information.

WE MONTANANS

a book written by Norma Tirrell, is a snapshot of Montana's people at work, at play, and at home. Over 100 interviews and 260 full-color photographs depict the Big Sky State in all its beauty and Montanans at their best.

Through a special arrangement with the publisher, your purchase of *We Montanans* from Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies helps support important HMHB programs. The cost of a hardcover copy is \$25.95 plus \$1.50 for shipping; and for a softcover, \$19.95 plus \$1.50 for shipping.

CENTENNIAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Don't miss the chance to honor a centennial baby you know! A few Montana Centennial Birth Certifi-

cates are left, and can be purchased from Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies for \$12.00 each. If you are a parent or grandparent of, or have a friend or relative with a 1989 Montana baby, consider giving this officially sanctioned Centennial gift. The certificate is framable, personalized and will become an important family keepsake.

"HEALTHY BOTTOM LINE" POSTERS

What would be more appropriate for a doctor's office or nursery than a lineup of bare-bottomed babies promoting good health? 35"W x 10"H posters available for \$5.00 each.

Use the form on the back of this page to order any of the above items. Send to HMHB

Certificate of Birth in the state of MONTANA



NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

Name to appear on certificate (please type or print)

Date of Birth: _____

Enclose check or money order made out to Healthy Mothers,
Healthy Babies in the amount of \$17.00
(\$15 Tax-Deductible Contribution plus \$2 postage and handling)

HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES 1990 Membership Application/Renewal

Name: _____

Organization/Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

☐ Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Membership Dues

- ☐ Sustaining Member \$200
- ☐ Organizational Member \$50
- ☐ Individual Member \$15

Please check one:

- ☐ New Member
- ☐ Renewal

ORDER FORM

ITEM	QTY	PRICE EACH	POSTAGE & HANDLING	SUB-TOTAL
Adolescent Health Status		\$10.00	incl.	
We Montanans – Hardcover		\$25.95	\$1.50	
We Montanans – Softcover		\$19.95	\$1.50	
Healthy Bottom Line Poster		\$5.00	incl.	
HMHB lapel pin		\$3.00	incl.	
TOTAL				

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

DATE _____

☐ Please send me a *Centennial Birth Certificate* order form.

Enclosed is my check or money order in the amount of \$ _____

Send to: HMHB, P.O. Box 876
Helena, Montana 59624



Breastfeeding Initiative

Project Coordinator: Pat Hennesy

The 1989 WIC re-authorization legislation included a compulsive set of breastfeeding provisions and placed responsibility for promotion and expansion of breastfeeding on WIC.

Provisions of the law include:

- Earmarking \$8 million for promotion and support of breastfeeding. This is not new money but will come from each state's allocation for nutrition services and program administration.
- Requiring development of a national definition of breastfeeding. USDA and HHS are required to develop the national definition. The NAWD Breastfeeding Promotion Committee has been getting information at the direction of the Executive Committee in order to make recommendations to MSDA on this definition.
- Requiring USDA to develop standards to assure breastfeeding promotion is adequate. Again, the Breastfeeding Promotion Committee is drafting recommendations for consideration by MSDA.
- Requiring states to designate a breastfeeding promotion coordinator
- Requiring states to train local staff to promote breastfeeding
- Requiring annual evaluation, including participant reviews
- Adding a lactation expert to the National Advisory Board

Regulations to implement the above provisions are being drafted. It is anticipated that they will be available for comment by mid-April.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Now Available:

A comprehensive manual "A Model for Improving Breastfeeding Practices and Nutrition - A Practical Guide for the Health Professional," (1989, 200 pages) serves as working tool and informational resource. The manual includes background on disincentives to breastfeeding, gaining professional and community support, protocols/procedures for direct care services, samples of support brochures for counseling, comprehensive documentation, and program data. Effectiveness of the manual was demonstrated in a 2-1/2 year program serving almost 1000 women. The manual was adapted by Montana WIC. Support for development of the program described in the manual came from the Bureau of Maternal & Child Health of DHHS (SPRANS project). Copies of the breastfeeding manual can be ordered from: Community Nutrition, RTI, P.O. Box 4113, Butte, MT 59702

Highlights from WIC National Association of WIC Director's Conference

New Orleans, February 12-17

-David Thomas, Montana State WIC Program Manager, was elected treasurer of the national association.

-Focus of the conference was the mandate issued by congress that WIC, MCH, and Medicaid join forces in a cooperative and collaborative approach to reducing the instance of low birthweight. Barriers that hinder health services to pregnant women, infants, and children were noted and possible solutions

offered. Other topics included resource netting, integrated data programs, education for the prevention of substance abuse, cost containment as well as clinical aspects of nutrition education and administrative concerns.

-There is a revolution in health care and as advocates for healthy mothers and healthy babies, WIC was charged with assuming leadership in a variety of areas, including promotion and support of breastfeeding.

Montana WIC Continuing Education

In 1989, the Montana State WIC Agency implemented a Continuing Education Credit Program which requires all local WIC staff to achieve at least 12 hours of continuing education credits annually. These credits are pre-approved by the state office staff. In addition to professional meetings, self-study modules are being adapted from Idaho for staff to use to obtain

continuing education credits. These modules are being made available via computer through the Montana Area Health Education Center. Thus, any health professional in Montana has access to the WIC training.

For more information, contact Kathy Niceswanger, RD, at the Montana WIC Program (444-4740).

HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES WEEK

May 13 through 19, 1990

In support of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, Governor Stan Stephens has declared May 13-19 as Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Week in Montana. HMHB Week is designed to focus attention on needs of mothers with small children; to promote perinatal health; and to increase awareness of programs supported by Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies in communities across the state. Mrs. Ann Stephens, Governor Stephen's wife, has graciously accepted the position of honorary chairperson for this special event.

In celebration of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Week a statewide baby food drive will be held from May 13 through 19. Your donations of single-item baby foods,

such as fruits and vegetables, are requested. The following is a list of donation sites and contact persons for specific information in each location:

Helena: Toni Jenson, 449-8611

Billings: Linda Healow, 259-4330

Missoula: Minkie Medora, 728-4100

Kalispell: Boni Stout, 752-5300

Gr. Falls: Jennifer Wells, 761-1190

Butte: Marnie Prigge, 494-7668

Glendive: TBA

All donations will be contributed to food banks in participating areas. HMHB volunteers are asked to contact local grocery stores, day care centers, ministerial councils

and churches to encourage their participation in the food drive.

In addition to the food drive, other activities planned during HMHB week include television and radio speaking engagements scheduled for all major Montana communities; library displays; newspaper feature stories; and speaking engagements scheduled by HMHB representatives to promote a variety of program activities.

If you wish to participate in Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies week by working with your community organization or local store, please contact the representative in your area or Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies at 449-8611.

MONTANA COALITION



Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies
2030 Eleventh Avenue, Suite 10
P.O. Box 876
Helena, MT 59624

Non Profit Organization

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Mr. Richard Miller
State Librarian
Montana State Library
1515 East 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620